

Appl. 10/601,828
Reply to Office Action of December 14, 2004
Amendment Dated June 14, 2005

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0033] with the following amended paragraph:

[0033] As illustrated in FIGS. 2A and 2B, a die cutting apparatus, generally indicated at 50, in accordance with the principles of the present invention is comprised of a base plate 52 having an outer portion 54 and an ~~outer~~ inner portion 56 separated by at least one blade 58. As better seen in FIG. 2B, the base plate 52 is provided with a layer 60 of plating that substantially surrounds the base plate 52 to provide a smooth outer surface. Such a layer 60 is more desirable when providing a die cutting apparatus, such as that shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, to cover any spot welds and produce a more commercially attractive product. Such a layer 60, however, also helps to further secure the blade 58 to the base plate 52.

Please replace paragraph [0038] with the following amended paragraph:

[0038] As illustrated in FIG. 3C, the outer and inner portions 114 and 116, respectively, are placed upon a flat support surface 122, with the inner portion 116 concentrically aligned within the outer portion 114 so as to provide a channel 112 of approximately equal width around the entire perimeter of the inside portion 116. The blade ~~112~~ 100 is then positioned above the base portion 110.

Please replace paragraph [0044] with the following amended paragraph:

[0044] As further illustrated in FIG. 5, a die cutting apparatus, generally indicated at 300, in accordance with the principles of the present invention, may include blades having various contours and shapes, both enclosed shapes and open shapes into a single cutting apparatus 300. The base plate 302 has been divided into an outer portion ~~204~~ 304, a first inner portion 306, a ~~third~~ second inner portion 308 and a ~~fourth~~ third inner portion 310. The first inner portion 306 lies within the outer portion 304 and the second and third inner portions 308 and 310 each lie within the first inner portion 306. Each of the portions 304, 306, 308 and 310 are separated by a respective blade 312, 314, and 316. A fourth blade 318, however, is provided in a elongate channel or slot 320 formed in the first inner portion 306, in this example to form the mouth of the smiley face. Such a blade 318 may be a straight edged blade or a perforation blade to form a perforation cut.

Please replace paragraph [0046] with the following amended paragraph:

[0046] While the blades forming the interior cuts described herein have been illustrated as being comprised of elongate, thin blade members, it is also contemplated that such blade members may be formed from punch type members such as those found on paper punches and the like. For example, if it is desired to cut eyes out of a sheet of material that is being die cut into the shape of a person or animal, elongate posts may be received within the insert

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holding one of the blades. The elongate posts may then be provided with sharpened edges for punching a hole in the material being cut. Furthermore, the posts may be held in place by providing a hole in the base plate. Such posts could then be attached, as by welding, to the base plate. As shown in FIG. 5, it is noted that the blades need not form a continuous, enclosed shape. The desired shape may be formed from a combination of continuous cuts, spaces and/or perforated cuts as may be desired.